

REMARKS

In the Office Action the Examiner noted that claims 1, 22-33 and 35-37 were pending in the application. The Examiner allowed claims 22-33 and 35-37, while rejecting claim 1. By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Thus, claims 1, 22-33 and 35-37 are pending in the application. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

Prior Art Rejection Based on Hikita References

In item 4 on pages 3-5 of the Office Action the Examiner has rejected claim 1 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,115,216 to Hikita et al. (Hikita et al. '216) taken in conjunction with Hikita JP 59-158117 (Hikita JP '117).

The Prior Response

In the prior response the applicants urged that claim 1 as amended specifies an arrangement where a pair of band-pass filters have a multiple ladder structure without specifying a structure of the first stage, and only one inductance element located between one of the band-pass filters and the common signal terminal. In contrast, the combination of Hikita JP '117 and Hikita '216 has two matching circuits between the first stage of both the first and second SAW filters and common signal terminals. Therefore, it was submitted that it would not have been obvious to have modified the prior art arrangement to have only one inductance element located between one of the band-pass filters and the common signal terminal.

The Examiner's Response in the Current Office Action

In item 6 on pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action the Examiner has responded to the applicants' prior patentability arguments as explained above by stating that "...this argument appears to narrowly construe the claim language. The Examiner is giving the limitation 'only one inductance element located between . . . ' its broadest possible interpretation, being that as long as there is only one inductance element at the recited location, there may be as many other inductance elements as desired in other locations." (emphasis in original)

Telephone Interview

In a telephone interview on February 27, 2006 applicants' attorney and the Examiner discussed how to amend claim 1 to overcome the above-described issue raised by the Examiner with respect to the recited features relating to the inductance element in claim 1. The Examiner and the applicants' attorney discussed the possibility of amending claim 1 to put it in its current form, wherein the inductance element is recited as follows:

an inductance element located between [at least] one side of only one of the [SAW] band-pass filters located at the first stage and [the pair of band-pass filter input] one of the common signal terminals, and no inductance element being located between the other of the band-pass filters and one of the common signal terminals [terminals and directly connected between the respective pair of input terminals of the at least one of the SAW filters and thereby in parallel to said at least one of the SAW filters].

During the telephone interview, the Examiner indicated that she believed that this claim amendment should resolve the issues raised by the Examiner with respect to the claimed inductance element in claim 1. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 1 should now be in condition for allowance.

U.S. Patent 4,959,487

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner makes reference to U.S. Patent 4,959,487 to Yuhara et al. However, applicants have noted that this patent number is listed under Yamasaki et al. and does not have subject matter pertinent to the present invention. It is requested that the Examiner advise the applicants of the correct patent number and identify same on a notice of references cited.

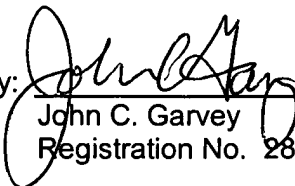
Summary

It is submitted that none of the references, either taken alone or in the combination, teach the present claimed invention. Thus, claims 1, 22-33 and 35-37 are deemed to be in a condition suitable for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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